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THE ORGANIZER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Vol. 3, No. 9

Agriculture Local #2, UFWA

December 1938

UNION ASKS \$1200 MINIMUM WAGE FOR AGRICULTURE

Going to bat for 442 employees of the Department who today receive salaries below \$1200 a year, Agriculture Local 2 has presented a written brief to Personnel Director Roy F. Hendrickson urging that a \$1200 minimum for wages be adopted.

Important points raised in this brief were: (1) that a wage below \$1200 is not sufficient to maintain standards of health and decency for persons living in Washington, (2) that the effect of such low wages is to undermine employee morale and working efficiency, and (3) that many other Government agencies already adhere to the \$1200 minimum standard.

The Union also pointed out that Congress has already established the principle of wage minimums for private industry and that the Government should act as a "model employer" in this respect. The recent report of the National Resources Committee to the President, which stressed the need for raising living standards of the lowest third of the population in order to bring about adjustment of the national economy, was also cited.

Mr. Hendrickson, in replying to the Union's memorandum, indicated that he is making a thorough study of the subject preparatory to making recommendations to Secretary Wallace.

PARTY

Saturday, December 10, 9:00 pm
532-17th St. nw

Refreshments - Dancing

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, Dec. 7, 8 pm
532-17th St. nw

Eleanor Nelson, Secretary of the UFWA will report on the recent CIO convention

ON THE LABOR FRONT

Because it solidified a powerful organization of 4,000,000 men and women, because it made plans for a new organizing drive with particular attention to the South, and because by a host of progressive resolutions it showed that the labor movement will play a leading role on behalf of democracy and progress, the Pittsburgh Convention of the CIO was a landmark in the history of American trade unionism.

The UFWA in its report to the Convention stated that "the United Federal Workers of America has proved that an active, vigorous union has a place in the Government service. It has proved that such a union can contribute greatly to the continuous improvement of the public service and to the benefit of every Government worker. It has proved that it has a very important part to play in making the Government of a democratic nation, the model employer of that nation, with standards and procedures as high as any required or desired in industry."

WORK OF THE ADJUSTMENT COMMITTEE

JOHN SCHRICKEER, EMPLOYED AS A P-1 CHEMIST for 7 years in the Bureau of Plant Industry has been recommended to the Civil Service Commission for a P-2 classification following the presentation of his case to the Administration by our Adjustment Committee.

IN SUPPLYING THE ADJUSTMENT COMMITTEE WITH DATA ON WAGES, Personnel Director Hendrickson found one full-time messenger receiving only \$600 per year. He assured the Committee that this position would be changed upon completion of the probationary period and that in the future this classification, CU-1, would not be used.

THE COMMITTEE IS PLEASED TO LEARN that an employee whose SP-1 (\$1020) job it saved a few months ago, has recently transferred to an SP-4 job (\$1620).

BELIEVING THAT MANY JOBS CAN BE SAVED by administrative planning, the Adjustment Committee took up the case of Mrs. Marion Braden, employed for 3½ years in the Audit Section of Farm Security, who was given termination notice because of reorganization. In just a few months Mrs. Braden's job was to be brought under Civil Service, and as her efficiency was unquestioned, the Committee presented the case to Mr. Brewer and Mr. Stevens, Appointment Officer and Personnel Director of FSA, with the result that a job was assured her at least until she received Civil Service status.

THE ORGANIZER

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FARMER-LABOR UNITY

Speaking before the Fifth National Conference on Labor Legislation, Secretary Wallace recently uttered a grave warning when he said, "If we are to prevent the development of a special brand of Fascism here, farmers and city workers must learn to work together in mutual confidence and respect."

In his speech, the Secretary pointed out the interdependence of farm and labor groups, showing how the income of farmers and the total of factory payrolls rise and fall together. "In some cases, chambers of commerce have succeeded in getting farmers to think and act as if they were capitalistic employers," Mr. Wallace said, after he had made clear that only one farmer out of seven has any hired help at all. So, "if farmers can realize that they are not only small business men, but also laborers, they will then appreciate that they have

little to gain from supporting selfish interests. . . ."

The Secretary's words have more than usual significance to employees of the Department of Agriculture, whose daily job is to work with farmers to promote their welfare. As workers in contact with farmers, we have the special responsibility of fusing the views of progressive labor with those of progressive farmers. This can only be done if we ourselves understand and are part of the progressive labor movement.

"OUT WITH IT"

"I find that many union grievance committees are using extremely good judgment in sizing up an alleged grievance and establishing whether it is real or fancied. . . . But a fancied grievance deserves as careful and conscientious consideration as any other, and I believe that an employee is wiser in following an 'out with it' policy when in doubt about reporting the grievance he feels rather than nursing it indefinitely."

(Roy F. Hendrickson, Director of Personnel, writing in the Federal Record, organ of the UFWA.)

JOIN THE UFWA

HERE AND THERE WITH AGRICULTURE LOCAL 2

AGRICULTURE EMPLOYEES ARE INVITED to attend the third of a series of Sunday Evening Socials, this Sunday, December 4th, at 8 pm, 2645 Connecticut Ave., Apt. 3. Hostesses will be Esther Klan and Ann Silverstein.

OUR COMMITTEE ON IN-SERVICE TRAINING has submitted a memorandum to the Administration which embodies the Union's recommendation for a program which would aid employees of the Department to orientate themselves to their jobs, to develop skill and efficiency, and to prepare for advancement. Watch THE ORGANIZER for details on this.

LOCAL 2 WILL BE REPRESENTED BY THREE DELEGATES at the "Conference on Pan-American Democracy" to be held in Washington, Dec. 10 & 11.

MANY SUGGESTIONS came in response to our request for a name to replace the "USDA ORGANIZER", but even more persons expressed themselves in favor of retaining our present name. After carefully considering the relative merits of all the names presented, the Education Committee decided to retain the present name with the slight modification of "THE ORGANIZER".

A RESOLUTION FAVORING THE PRESIDENT'S ACTION on Nazi barbarism was passed at the last meeting of our Local. The resolution urged that Ambassador Wilson should not be returned to Germany and that economic sanctions be applied to quarantine Fascist aggression.

A REPRESENTATIVE of the League of Women Shoppers addressed our Local meeting, explaining the way in which women in the league were aiding organized labor by boycotting the products of employers who are guilty of unfair labor practises.

JOIN THE UFWA TODAY!

PROGRAM

NAME _____

1. The five-day week
2. Automatic wage increases
3. Compensation for overtime
4. Minimum wage standard
5. Fair adjustment procedure

ROOM _____ PHONE _____

Fill out and send by chain envelope to John A. Schricker, Room 3630 South Building.